

Staff Work

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Choices You Make

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Choices You Make

Abstract

Posting about the lack of choices available for those trapped in human trafficking from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/the-choices-you-make/>

Keywords

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Disciplines

Christianity | Sociology

Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service](#) at Dordt College.

The Choices You Make

▫ inallthings.org/the-choices-you-make/

Lisa Smith

As you read this, you might be cozy and warm under a blanket with a cup of coffee or hot chocolate. You might be in an office, at your favorite coffee shop, or in a car. The point is that you had the choice to click on the link and read this article. There are people in our world that don't have that choice. They have no choices – they are told when they can sleep, what and when they can eat, and when they work (which ends up being longer than your eight-hour day). If they don't listen to what they are told, they are abused sexually and physically. If they get arrested and their pimp comes and bails them out, they are punished. Fear is their life. They won't go to high school prom or get to be in school plays. They don't have play dates with other kids, they aren't going on dates, and they don't get to go to movies. So, is it fair? What are we going to do about it?

During the month of December, the [International Justice Mission](#) (IJM) drives awareness of human trafficking through a project called [Dressember](#). Participants all over the world will wear a dress, bow-tie, or tie every day to raise awareness and advocate for people who do not have the right to choices, or their own freedom or voice. I participated in Dressember last month. During the month, I spent a lot of time thinking about human trafficking. My thoughts have centered on the facts, how to raise awareness, and how to respond as a Christian. I have thought about what I can do and about my journey of learning more about the human trafficking industry. I am not an expert, but I have learned a lot and continue to learn more about the human trafficking industry. Here are a few areas that have struck a chord with me in the last month:

The human trafficking industry is huge and many people don't know about it.

The biggest companies in the world have news stories, product updates, and a follower base that are very large. The human trafficking industry is a multi-billion dollar industry whose approximate net worth is \$150 billion. If we were to combine the net worth of the top few companies in the United States, the human trafficking industry would still have more money. Also, the human trafficking industry is not legal. Are you beginning to see an issue? Not only is the injustice in the fiscal means, the lack of industry regulations, and lack of accountability; the injustice is also in the maltreatment of every individual that is forced into the industry.

Maltreatment.

Monday's [article on iAt](#) pointed out the typical steps of human trafficking: tricked, trapped, transported, and used. The victims are abused, fear is instilled in them, and they are forced to perform work all the time. The victims don't see a penny of it. If they are in sex trafficking, they are required to perform sexual acts whenever they are told. This could be up 26 times in one day. If they don't follow instructions, they are beaten. Some of them are forced to get addicted to drugs so the pimp can have control over them. The victim wants to get their next fix and the pimp will supply it. It keeps the victim coming back for more. The pimp "breaks them in" to the point where they are no longer a person but an object that can be bought.

Freedom of the survivors.

For me, this is two-fold. I want everyone to be free. No human being deserves to go through emotional, physical, and psychological trauma, or to be treated in this way. They are also sometimes forced into addictive substances. I want them to be free. I want them to discover that they are a person, not an object. Not only that, but something I have realized is that their true freedom would be the discovery of Christ.

Finding Christ's love, peace, safety, and complete freedom. I can work to help free the victims of human trafficking, but complete freedom is in Christ. I pray as Christ does his work and I believe he will rescue.

Prayer for the johns and pimps.

A john is the customer paying for service, while a pimp is the person collecting on the service. When it comes to human trafficking, I ask the question, "How could anyone treat a person like an object?" It enrages me. Yet, God has taught me forgiveness towards the people who hurt victims. Someone once told me, "forgiving does not mean what the person did was right, but it shows God's love". This was impactful for me because I have had a hard time processing how to forgive someone when human trafficking is outright dehumanizing. Yet, we are called to forgive.

The information in this article only scratches the surface regarding human trafficking. I am not an expert, but I understand that this problem is much larger than you and me, and our biggest defense is God. Please join me in praying for the survivors, those still trafficked, and the johns and pimps. Pray for God to penetrate and for people to be proactive in small and big ways.

What are you going to do to help combat the biggest slavery issue known today?